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Identical letters dated 6 June 2011 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write in regard to the disturbing and dangerous provocations that were carried out yesterday on the disengagement line between Syria and Israel for the second time in recent weeks, threatening peace and stability in our region.

Yesterday, in a series of coordinated, violent protests in the areas of Majdal Shams and Quneitra, hundreds of individuals sought to breach the disengagement line with Israel. These individuals tried to break through fences in the area, threw Molotov cocktails and other large objects at the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), and used other violent means.

The IDF acted with maximum restraint in confronting the significant threat of violence facing it, but with determination to prevent any breach of the disengagement line. To this end, it took numerous measures, including issuing clear warnings in Arabic over IDF loudspeakers about the serious dangers associated with attempting to breach the disengagement line.

On numerous occasions during this incident, the IDF halted its operations so that members of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) could access the area and treat the wounded. However, instead of cooperating with the ICRC, many of the protestors continued to act violently. They even seized ICRC flags in blatant violation of basic principles and norms of international law.

I wish to stress that the responsibility for any harm caused to the individuals involved in these violent provocations lies clearly with the Government of Syria, which is responsible for preventing the breach of the agreed disengagement line in accordance with its international obligations and Security Council resolutions.

In the days leading up to yesterday's incident, Israel clearly and repeatedly alerted the United Nations, the international community and other parties in the region about the explosive potential of protests planned for 5 June 2011. Following the events of 15 May 2011, we stated unequivocally that Israel would act firmly to prevent any breach of the disengagement line.

Despite these clear warnings, Syria did not prevent demonstrators from arriving at the disengagement line and attempting to cross it. To the contrary, this incident, which could not have taken place without the knowledge of the Syrian

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authorities, reflects a blatant attempt by Syria to distract international attention from the violent repression of its own people.

Israel calls on the international community to convey a clear message to Syria that such provocations carry serious potential for escalation and must cease completely. We expect the Government of Syria to take all measures to prevent such dangerous incidents from reoccurring in the future.

Israel is determined to protect its borders and citizens and will continue to take great efforts to maintain regional peace and security, with the hope that its neighbours will act in the same way.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Haim **Waxman**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.